

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 11-18 and 20-28 are pending. Claim 19 is canceled by the present amendment. Claims 1-10 were canceled previously. Claims 11-14, 18, and 20 are amended. Claims 21-28 are newly added. Support for the amendments to Claims 11 and 18 and for new claims 21-28 can be found in now-canceled Claim 19 and in the specification on page 4, lines 10-32, for example, and on page 7, lines 14-20, for example. Support for the amendments to Claims 12, 13, and 20 is self-evident. The specification is amended to include headings where appropriate. Additionally, the specification is amended to include a brief description of the drawings based on description present in the specification upon filing. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, the specification was objected to for not including proper headings. Claim 12 was objected to for reciting “based on” rather than a different term. Claims 11-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Ries et al. (U.S. Patent Pub. 2003/0124281, herein “Ries”). Claim was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Ries in view of Abare et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,627,016, herein “Abare”).

Regarding the objection to the specification, the specification is amended to include headings as set forth on page 2 of the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the objection to the specification is overcome.

Regarding the objection to Claim 12, Claim 12 is amended to recite “the tank and component comprise” rather than “the tank and component are based on.” Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the objection to Claim 12 is overcome.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 11-19 as anticipated by Ries and the rejection of Claim 20 as obvious over Ries and Abare, those rejections are respectfully traversed by the present response.

Amended independent Claim 11 recites that the perimeter of the opening of the tank includes a deformed portion of a wall of the tank. Additionally, Claim 11 recites that the component and tank are molded in one or more molds including impressions corresponding to the conical surfaces.

One benefit of the arrangement recited in amended independent Claim 11 is that the conical portion of the tank can have a greater depth than the thickness of the tank wall itself. In other words, as a portion of the tank wall is deformed, either inward or outward relative to the component to be attached, the depth of the portion of the tank wall that mates with the component to be attached is not limited in depth by the thickness of the tank wall. Therefore, a relatively rigid structure can be provided.

In contrast to the features noted above, the tank wall described in Ries includes a tapered portion in which the tank wall becomes thinner and thinner. This tapered portion receives the conical component to be attached to the tank. In other words, Ries does not disclose that a perimeter of the opening of the tank is a deformed portion of a wall of the tank. Rather, the tank wall itself is reduced in thickness to receive the component.

Nor does Ries disclose that the fuel tank and component are produced by molding using one or more molds that have impressions that correspond to the conical surfaces of the component and tank. Rather, as discussed above, the wall of the tank in Ries gradually becomes thinner and thinner and is therefore not formed by a mold with **recesses** corresponding to a conical surface as recited in amended independent Claim 11. Accordingly, amended independent Claim 11 further patentably distinguishes over Ries for at least this additional reason.

Amended independent Claim 18 recites, in *method format*, substantially similar features to those discussed above regarding amended independent Claim 11 and patentably distinguishes over Ries for at least the same reasons as amended independent Claim 11 does.

Abare fails to remedy the deficiencies discussed above regarding Ries in relation to amended independent Claims 11 and 18. Rather, Abare does not disclose either the deformed wall of the tank forming a conical surface or that the wall of the tank is produced by molding in one or more molds including impressions corresponding to the conical surface of the tank as recited in amended independent Claims 11 and 18. Accordingly, no reasonable combination of Ries and Abare would include all of the features recited in either of the amended independent claims or any of the claims depending therefrom.

Newly added dependent **Claim 21** recites that the wall of the tank includes a bent portion defining the perimeter of the opening of the tank. None of the cited references discloses this feature.

Newly added dependent **Claim 23** recites that the conical surface of the perimeter of the opening in the tank protrudes from a portion of the tank wall in a direction toward the component. As shown in Figs. 1-3 of Ries, the wall (5) does not protrude. Rather, the wall (5) of Ries becomes thinner and thinner where it attaches to a component.

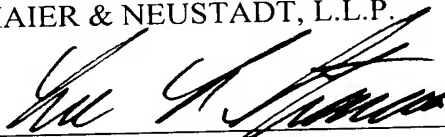
Newly added dependent **Claim 24** recites that the thickness of a wall portion of the tank forming the conical surface of the tank is a same thickness as a thickness of a wall portion of the tank surrounding the conical surface of the tank. In contrast, as discussed above, the wall (5) of Ries becomes thinner where it attaches to a component.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 21, 23, and 24 further patentably distinguish over any proper combination of the cited references for at least the additional reasons discussed above, as well as by virtue of their dependencies.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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